



COOK COUNTY BOARD OF ETHICS

WHAT CAN I DO ON ELECTION DAY?

The Cook County Ethics Ordinance, as well as a number of other laws and County rules, place strict prohibitions on the use of taxpayer-funded County time and resources for political activity. This is a very brief summary - for a complete listing of the prohibitions on political activity refer to Section 2-583 of the Ethics Ordinance or call the Board of Ethics at 312-603-4304.

Limits on Political Activity by County Employees

- County employees shall not engage in political activity during any compensated time (with the exception of employees approved to participate in the **Cook County Clerk's Elections Day Worker Program**) and shall not use County property or resources for political activities for the benefit of any candidate or political organization.
- At no time shall any County official and employee *require* any County employee to perform any prohibited political activity during work hours, during any County compensated time off or as a condition of employment.
- Participation in political activity shall not be a condition of, or rewarded by, any employees' salary, bonus, compensatory time or continued employment.

Examples of "Prohibited Political Activity"

- Assisting at the polls on election day on behalf of a candidate, political organization, or for or against any referendum question.
- Soliciting votes on behalf of a candidate, political organization, or for or against any referendum question, or helping in an effort to get voters to the polls.
- Distributing, preparing for distribution, or mailing campaign literature, campaign signs, or other campaign material on behalf of any candidate, or for or against any referendum question.

What Activity is Permitted

- Nothing in the Ethics Ordinance prohibits a County employee from engaging in activities related to his or her official duties or from voluntarily engaging in political activity on his or her own time (including vacation, personal or compensatory time off).
- In accordance with Cook County Ordinance No. 07-O-20, Section 22-1, employees who participate in the **Employees as Election Day Workers Program and are certified by the Cook County Clerk's Office** can serve in **Suburban Cook County** as equipment managers, election judges or other election day workers for elections conducted by the office of the Cook County Clerk. These employees may be excused with prior approval of their department director or bureau chief from their regular work assignments, without being required to use vacation, personal, or compensatory time off as long as they are participants in the **Employees as Election Day Workers Program**.

Penalties

Penalties for violating these provisions of the Ethics Ordinance may include employment sanctions (including discharge), fines ranging from \$500 to \$5,000, and prosecution for a Class A misdemeanor.

Where to Direct Questions or Report Violations

Contact the Board of Ethics with your questions or to report violations at 312-603-4304.